

# Data and Evidence Group Survey

## Information on the Data & Evidence subgroup

- *Social Justice Funders - **Data & Evidence subgroup** - we are setting this up following discussions with a number of funders and key stakeholders about how we can better work together to utilise data and evidence to understand the impact of legal advice. The group will be chaired by Ash Patel, Programme Head - Justice at the Nuffield Foundation.*
- *The overarching aims of the group is for funders to:*
  - **Develop collaborative approaches about the insight we each collate from our activities in terms of;**
    - *Understanding what data and evidence we hold and what this tells us*
    - *Considering how we can collaboratively collate learning to form an evidence base*
    - *Sharing information on our approaches to evidence impact*
    - *Strategically planning our collective approach to supporting increased access to justice*
- *We are a cross sector group of funding initiatives concerned with the role of the law in addressing inequalities and achieving a more just society. The Social Justice Funders Group (SJFG) includes those who are funders of not-for-profit legal advice, and broader justice related tools, interventions, initiatives and policy work and others who are interested in learning more about the role of the law as a tool for social change.*
- *Advice UK role within subgroup: The access to justice ecosystem involves many different stakeholders including Government departments, funders, umbrella organisations, frontline providers and the wider legal community.*

Link to Form:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=HF6ooj0vWEqwXloHHY3CfxpDstYNCZIKqNG00Ueo6Z9UODE2UVZUV09aSFNCMTlaN1ZRRjNFQks1UC4u&route=shorturl>

4. What is your organisation currently working on in relation to strategic oversight of data and evidence (e.g. developing data standards, creating tools/tech, dashboards, capacity building sector)?

AdviceUK is actively engaged in a range of initiatives to enhance strategic oversight of data and evidence across the advice sector:

- **Capacity Building:** Through programmes such as *Measuring What Matters*, we support members in improving data collection, management, and analysis. This includes offering training on data literacy and developing frameworks to capture meaningful insights into service delivery and impact. We emphasize promoting Whole Person and Community approaches to help members achieve funding and service goals effectively.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration and tools:** We provide accessible tools such as *AdvicePRO*, a case management system with data dashboards and reporting features. These tools enable advice organisations to better understand client needs, identify trends, and demonstrate impact to funders, and provide us at AdviceUK with comprehensive data about our members and the advice sector at larger. Additionally, resources like *AdviceFinder* and *AdviceJobs* offer insights into the sector’s reach, recruitment trends, and funding patterns, while insurance-related data supports risk management. Examples such as partnerships with the Scottish Government and London Councils demonstrate how AdviceUK leverages *AdvicePRO* to deliver coordinated capacity and improve sector-wide data practices.
- **Promoting Data Standards:** We collaborate with members to encourage the adoption of consistent data standards, reducing administrative burden and facilitating better data sharing, benchmarking, and learning. Our work includes promoting the responsible use of innovations such as *AdvicePRO*, Salesforce, and now, AI to streamline case management, improve monitoring accuracy, and save advisers time. We also prioritise ethical considerations, ensuring compliance with internal and regulatory policies around data protection, technology utilisation and AI.

5. Thinking about your organisation, what are the top 3 things you would like to learn from your data and the evidence that would help you to improve your services/operations?

- **Tracking Client Needs and Emerging Issues:** We aim to deepen our understanding of shifts in client demographics, challenges, and the types of issues people seek advice for (e.g., debt, housing, immigration). Leveraging data from tools like *AdvicePRO* and insights from certification programmes such as *Skilling Up for Justice*, we can better tailor our support for advice centres, focus resources where they are most needed, and anticipate sector trends more effectively.
- **Effectuating Best Practice and Advocacy:** Informing members about what could prevent them from effectively using their data to influence policy—whether it's technical, cultural, or resource-based—and identifying practical solutions. Additionally, we seek to standardise and use data we possess to provide evidence-based advocacy, presenting insights to MPs and other stakeholders to support the sector and members’ needs.
- **Enhancing Impact Measurement:** We are committed to learning how our members measure the outcomes of their services and identifying innovative or successful approaches that could be shared or scaled. Through initiatives like *Measuring What Matters*, we aim to support members in improving their data collection methods and utilising insights to strengthen their funding and service delivery goals.

6. Thinking about the advice sector in its entirety (including front-line services, funders and advice sector stakeholders) what are the top 3 things that you would like to learn from across the sector that would help your organisation provide a better service?

1. **Member:** We want to understand what tools and resources members require to address the increasing demand for services effectively. Additionally, we aim to identify the most pressing policy issues they would prioritise if given the opportunity to influence decision-makers. We are also keen to learn about the systemic difficulties they face, particularly those shared with other organisations working on similar advice issues, to explore collective solutions.
2. **Funder:** Gaining clarity on funders' priorities, expectations, and limitations around data and evidence—such as preferred metrics and how these inform funding decisions—would enable us to better support members. Understanding how funders might adjust their requirements to reflect the capacity challenges of advice centres would also be valuable.
3. **Policy:** We aim to learn what efforts advice organisations are making to inform policy, the strategies they employ, and the extent of their success. Understanding these factors will help improve collaboration and advocacy across the sector.

7. Please list up to 3 things the Social Justice Funders Data and Evidence sub-group could do in the next 12 months that could help deliver any of the points you raise in response to questions 2 and 3?

- **Raise Awareness of AdviceUK Memberships and Programmes:** The sub-group could highlight AdviceUK's memberships and initiatives, including capacity-building programmes and the Whole Person/Whole Community approach, encouraging organisations to build end-to-end advice journeys focusing on client engagement rather than solely outcomes.
- **Support Unsuccessful Applicants:** Provide targeted support for organisations that apply for funding but are unsuccessful, helping them understand funders' requirements and improve their chances of future success.
- **Fund Sector-Wide Research:** Invest in research to aggregate data across the advice sector, providing insights that support AdviceUK's policy and advocacy work, including evidence for the newly formed Policy and Public Affairs team. Collaboration with academia or research experts could also enhance this work.

8. Do you have any feedback about this questionnaire?

The questionnaire is thoughtful, but it would be helpful to know more about the sub-group's capacity on the extent of influence. Sharing this alongside the survey results could help us refine or expand our

suggestions in the next one. The character limit felt a little restrictive at times, and one question seemed to be repeated. Including more opportunities for quantitative responses could also provide a clearer picture of sector sentiment. Lastly, it would be great to understand how the responses will be used and whether participants will have access to the collective insights gathered through this process, either in a report or a discussion at our next meeting.

I would also like to point out that a submission has mistakenly been made by Dal Warburton at an earlier date. We would appreciate if both responses from AdviceUK could be clubbed in order to omit any duplication of points being raised.